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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the relationship between culture and curriculum, combining academic discourse relating to the construction of identity, policy, and curriculum and conversations with 42 members of a New Zealand intermediate school community about the nature of culture. Interviewers' comments and stories illuminate their views of Maori and White culture, cultural differences and interrelationships, intergroup relations in school and community, and cross-cultural communication and learning. The study suggests that while an initial premise of fluidity and complexity in understandings of culture is present in academic and community sources, so too are principles of constancy that emphasize relatedness. In order that these principles may promote understandings of culture in the teaching of culture, a revisionary perspective is needed towards the canon (particularly the sources of knowledge to be regarded as authoritative) and towards the research, interpretation, and representation of understandings of culture. The development of a "language for being related" is suggested as one way in which teacher and researcher understandings of culture might embrace diversity and equity issues in curriculum. This language would include the following principles: adopting a global perspective of culture that honors the particularities of local context; incorporating many ways of knowing culture and expressing that knowing; seeking non-oppositional ways of interpreting cultural difference; upholding the view that the teaching of culture is a collaborative holistic project where learning takes place in many ways with many teachers; affirming the coexistence of change and constancy in understandings of culture; and making explicit the teacher's curricular contribution to understandings of culture. Contains 47 references and a glossary. (TD)

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

DREAMS OF WOKEN SOULS: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURE AND CURRICULUM

by

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Te Whare Whai Matauraka Ki Otautahi

A paper presented at the 1998 AERA meeting, San Diego, USA

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MIHIMIHI

To the breath of life
that sighed before sound was heard, greetings.
To the water, air, land, life and lives
that have shaped signatures
upon this planet and this person, greetings.

I listen for the many voices of this Land,
the birds, the trees, the rocks and the waters;
they speak of Time immemorial, of the confluence of many springs.
I stand on a territory known to those who were
the first protectors of this Land.
And I gather now
with those who have since joined
the collective histories of the present.

Gathering as both One and Many.
We listen,
seeking reassurance and surprise.
We speak
of aspirations and imaginings,
of memories to be present in our making of the future.
We move,
impelled by understandings of justice and equity;
the dreams of our woken souls

Greetings
to those who gather,
to those who have spoken and speak,
to those who have listened and hear,
in silence and sound.

Greetings

ABSTRACT

This text is a venture in honoring principles manifest within conversations for being related. It focuses upon the relationship between culture and curriculum, combining academic discourse relating to the construction of identity, policy and curriculum with conversations undertaken with 42 members of a school community in Aotearoa New Zealand; the intention being to inform the project of teaching culture.

This study contributes to curriculum theory by describing a 'language' for the processes and purposes of culture in education, and by modelling the principles of that 'language.' The 'language' describes the tone for conversations for being related, the assumption being that the speakers will contribute their own vocabulary. Principles of the suggested language include the following 'tonal' qualities:

- adopting a global perspective of culture that honors particularities of the local context;
- incorporating many ways of knowing culture and expressing that knowing;
- developing non-oppositional interpretations of cultural difference;
- perceiving the teaching of culture as a collaborative, long-term, holistic project;
- affirming the coexistence of change and constancy in understandings of culture;
- making explicit the teacher's curricular contribution to understandings of culture;
- respecting the voices of community, voices that may amend and stand alongside the academic canon.

This study suggests that while an initial premise of fluidity and complexity in understandings of culture is present in academic and community sources, so too are principles of constancy which emphasize relatedness. In order that these principles may inform understandings of culture in the teaching of culture, a revisionary perspective is needed towards the canon (particularly the sources of knowledge to be regarded as authoritative), and towards the research, interpretation and representation of understandings of culture. The development of a 'language for being related' is suggested as one way in which teacher and researcher understandings of culture might embrace diversity and equity issues in curriculum. This project contributes to the much needed discussion on ways in which 'culture' might work to promote a philosophy of education that combines many ways of knowing in conversations for being related.

THE WELCOME

As We Gather Outside

[the visitors]

On one side

We gather because we wish to allow good to catch our hearts. There is an openness to the ineffable, possibly even the divine. Perhaps we too shall be converted: to believe in the unseen, to have conviction of our innermost hopes; converted by our yearnings for goodness in the life of the mind and of the spirit; a brave conversion to constancy.

We mingle then, waiting outside before the call to listen. We await the events that shall bring sounds of what we already know: that our words must involve the hidden places of the rational soul; that when we teach we do not teach words as reality, but realities by means of words.

[from those who wait]

On the other side

We see you ready. Almost ready. We see too the hesitancy, the shufflings from uncertainty. Not knowing the way can be disorienting. But we feel your good intent. It should be then that we offer some sense of where we will journey together; to care for you even before we meet across this living bridge which we are creating.

Where we go

In this place of placing words we will delve into the relationship between culture and curriculum. We will explore understandings of culture in curriculum

theory, and community sensibilities. Not one voice being superior to another, or case study of another, but many voices combining as we stand alongside those involved in the teaching of culture. The voices of text and community join to illustrate ways in which understandings of culture collect people and the notions by which people live and teach. This will be our response to "our basic and crucial need to know other people" (Code, 1990: 37).

We move through three stages of being: The Welcome, Words of the Woken, and the Fare-well. In welcoming you we describe the principles guiding our gathering in this place of text. The Words of the Woken are in three congregations: that of theory, of community, and of voices intent upon resolution. At first we consider ideas which explain curriculum, culture and what it means to teach culture. It is here that we encounter the importance of location , theoretically and geographically.

In the Second Congregation, the Words are those of the community: children, parents and teachers from a school community in Aotearoa New Zealand. They provide intercessions in our journey towards understanding; representations of the spoken and unspoken, individual and collective, written and oral expressions of understandings of culture and curriculum. The beginning was to ask about culture, the intent was to inform the work of teachers. And in this particular place we find that the more one is oriented to a place, its people and ways, the more one comes to understand the broad, fundamental principles upon which relationships are based; core principles and values common to many, yet also the energy behind culture-specific practices.

The Third Congregation of Words returns the gaze to the broader and original matter of the relationship between culture and curriculum: to where we have 'been' and where we might now go, as teachers and researchers. Here we seek

a resolution, an amalgamation of the Words. Universal principles, alongside 'earthed' pragmatics are proffered. Where we might have anticipated little but flux and change in the realm of identity we also encounter fundamentals and constancy. Here then we declare a language for being related; principles of relatedness to be honored in curricular and research representations of culture.

Finally, we will leave this text-place of ours. In the going out we stand together to recall how good might catch our hearts. We aspire to fare well as researchers-teachers-humans. Perhaps it will only be at the closure of our gathering that we may begin to understand what passed before and between us.

Principles that guide our gathering

In this place of placing words we find story telling, narrative, dialogue, anecdote; the play of words as a semantic description of understandings of culture that are conceptual and emotional. We 'play' to mirror the necessary traits of the teacher of culture; accepting that we-who-teach need to become aware of our projections of meaning upon the otherwise empty word 'culture'. To understand the relationship between culture and curriculum is to understand that teaching culture is more than 'teaching *about*' and more like teaching as *being*. That is the way of the words in this place as well: they honor ways of being.

We do not seek to define 'culture'. We know there are meanings and meanings and meanings grouped under *culture*: one glorious multi-jointed word. Yes, that would be a very brave person who would claim to say all the ways of knowing 'culture.' We wish instead to speculate over how we might understand our understanding of culture, that is, culture-as-lived, culture-as-both-construction-and-practice, culture-as-relationship-to-one-another; to

speculate upon alternative understandings that will enhance practices and research associated with culture and curriculum. We do not seek to define, rather we seek to honor understandings of culture that will enable conversations for being related.

Where we stand

By gathering here we enter a domain, the one of this text. In the turn of the page you enter further into a shared domain. In this place of text we will, together, view the 'landscape' features of historical and academic discourses around culture and curriculum, explore the terrain of school-community based understandings of culture.

And we can also know Place in its original sense of "the sole of the foot", that is, the part of the body that touches the earth (Davis, 1994, p. 79); at that point of contact that we become part of the place we occupy. This is how we understand the reality of culture in education and this place of text we will soon share: that in exploring this place we do not attempt a spatial, temporal or social fix on understandings of culture. Rather we seek out where these understandings place each of us, our points of contact in this text-place, and beyond.

The science in our method of journey

We might then say that our shared place of text will be an 'essay' rather than research report;[1] a reminder that here, as happens elsewhere,[2] we search for method, rather than summarise empirical inquiry; that we accept the spirit of the root form of 'essay', from the French verb *essayer* (to try), and thereby actively search for further ways of thinking about, and trying out, the

[1] I am grateful to Brent Davis' (1994) lead in this distinction between essay and report.
[2] For examples of this methodology in education research, see Calliou (1996), Davis (1994).

relationship between culture and curriculum.[3] Methodologically, this is how we will journey.

This means that much is expected of you as you enter this place. Things may differ from usual patterns. Here, what is to be learnt and communicated is present throughout the text. That is, because we see that we undertake here to explore possibilities of understandings, and not merely recant them, the entire place of this text becomes educational. So we ask you to look around constantly, as you proceed. We reveal as we go, not waiting to summarise as we conclude (Davis, 1994; see also Cruickshank, 1995; and Bauman, 1993).

Strands that bind

As you approach, we ask that you look for and trust the two strands (intellectual discourse about 'culture', and community sensibilities about 'culture') which bind our words to the educational theme of teaching culture. At times we may seem to follow one apart from the other, but in truth they are strands of the one cord.

And we have lingering concerns too that will be present as we walk together. These are like cross-strands within our cord: they complicate but also strengthen our coming together:

- if *culture* is a political, historical and social concept then understanding *culture* as a polythetical, fluid concept will assist in developing an authentic pedagogy of culture;

[3] In reviewing themes and directions of research production and use in teacher education, Doyle (1990) suggests that a shift to understanding contexts, situations, interpretive knowledge and indeterminacy in meaning (rather than individual behaviour and general cognitive processes) has led teacher education researchers away from the traditional "psychologising" of teaching and towards theories of curriculum that "capture the richness and complexity of teaching practices, classroom life and teacher's knowledge" (pp. 19-20). I write then in response to his call for the further development of a language of education research that is interpretive and procedural, embedded in the particulars of learning domains.

- if *culture* is to be an agency of careful self-awareness through curriculum, then it requires contextual orientation;
- if *culture* is implicitly and explicitly present in curriculum policy and practices (and also, therefore, in education research), then all teachers are involved in the teaching of culture;
- if research into the relationship between culture and curriculum is a form of interpretation and representation, a story retold, then the researcher has a narrative that contributes to the conceptualisation of *culture*.

All the strands are inextricably linked. As we process towards different understandings of culture each strand should be present, showing how one comes close to the other. In this journey then, we will be part of an accumulation of understanding about culture, the nature of the relationship between culture and curriculum and what it means to teach culture. This too shall be as a mirror: reflecting how we in education must explore our nearness to each other and our lands; that we are in relationship to one another, and that in speaking through text and voice we partake in conversations for being related.

Understandings of how culture and curriculum might combine within these conversations of text and voice now call across to us. We see you look towards the cry, we see your face, your hands. There is movement. We behold life.

WORDS OF THE WOKEN

First congregation of words: Theory and practice

Welcome. I turn to you, my audience. I know you are trying to understand me and to detach yourself in that understanding. But for a while you have to see through my eyes, in order to understand. And then detach. Look a while with me, at curriculum, culture and the teaching of culture. Hold my lines and know that you are welcome. I am, like you, open to the learning

Curriculum and culture

My exploration of the relationship between culture and curriculum requires a conceptualisation of curriculum that is both document and symbol, principled and particular. This is curriculum as document, in the sense of formalised sets of curriculum statements, *and* symbol, in the sense of curriculum being the embodiment of private meaning and public hope. This is curriculum that is broadly principled according to moral understandings *and* particular to the people, time and place from which curriculum emerges with its focus upon the future.

And as I explore I deliberately situate my discussion in Aotearoa New Zealand. Firstly, I situate because the relationship between culture and curriculum requires an orientation, a place from which and to which conceptualisations of culture might come to exist and act (see Freire & Macedo, 1995). Without place and all its particularities we risk nothing. Secondly, the relationship between Maori and Pakeha[4] in Aotearoa New Zealand is the salient characteristic of

[4]The concept *Pakeha* is a complex one in which attitudes, usage, identity and explanation combine, and to a certain extent clash. Joan Metge (1993) states that there are at least six different explanations for this term, some of which are derogatory (p. 13). Because of the

curriculum in my time and place. It is compelling in all dimensions of education. Finally, the very specificity of location in this discourse poses challenges to broader issues associated with complacency, imperialism and parochialism. So I situate, like most, due to personal concerns: to usefully inform teaching and teacher education; to move away from research traditions bound by the "psychologising" (Doyle, 1990) of teaching; to move towards theories of curriculum that "capture the richness and complexity of curriculum practices, classroom life, student's and teacher's knowledge" (pp. 19-20); to develop a language of education research that is interpretive and procedural, embedded in the particulars of learning domains. Then I analyse, like most, with skills and influences arising from and returning to a consideration of wider society.

And so I then can stand, wanting to know more of the reality which is 'not contained within the dictionary or in grammar' (Ricoeur, 1991, p. 431). I stand here in this land. Place. Placed. Contextualisation exposes the history of that which might otherwise seem to be outside history, that which might seem to be sanitised, natural and therefore universal. My concern is with particularities; curriculum conceived through the dynamics of peoples in regions of context. I cannot teach without expressing or encountering the nature of culture in this land of mine. In the classroom, with the children, amongst the teachers, within the communities, I meet the peoples of this land. To study and explain curriculum, is to divine understanding of my land.

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confusion and feelings engendered some people choose to relegate the concept to realms of obscurity or irrelevance. For those who accept the term, there is a sense of location and identity. For Maori the concept *Pakeha* is used contextually. In some cases *Pakeha* will refer to those who are descended from the English, in other situations a two-way grouping might suffice. In this more general context *Pakeha* can refer to all non- New Zealanders and thereby encompass the multicultural dimension in the bicultural construct. However, regardless of the contextually oriented usage, this word links directly with the descendants of early English settlers and therefore orientates itself to the relationship established by the Treaty of Waitangi.

I know my land-ed-ness when I think of 'culture'. A particular context comes to mind: Pakeha, Maori relations in Aotearoa-New Zealand. In this case, a bicultural context in which I am both self and other. I seek to be a biculturally aware citizen of Aotearoa New-Zealand; to be capable of bicultural communication. In the process I learn that there are at least two distinct ways in which the people around me conceptualise culture.

One way is to conceptualise culture as unique and therefore incommensurable with other cultures (see Sharp 1995, p. 117). In this form, the word 'culture' is used with an article (in both singular and plural forms) so that the focus is upon the particular and collective ways of doing and thinking of particular peoples. Accordingly, Maori ontology can be claimed to be a present and living reality of particular ancestors and gods, an unfolding revelation of a future order generated within that reality; Maori epistemology can be said to comprise unique ways of knowing these things; and a moral code can be constituted, through which these ways might be respected. Pakeha too will possess an ontology, epistemology and morality, contrasting with Maori, and true to Pakeha ways.

From this point of view, there are no grounds on which cross-cultural comparisons and judgments might occur. The value of each understanding of culture is equal, untranslatable to another culture, and justified within its respective culture. A bicultural curriculum becomes one of separate and separated education systems.

However understandable politically, as a response to inequities experienced, this talk of culture as stark, total difference is inherently pessimistic. I must question whether we can expect no good from the nature of human intent, human rationality; no possibility of translation across cultures and 'conceptual

schemes' (Hacking, 1982). Do we really believe that a culture is a conceptual whole - unknowable, separate, entirely unique and beyond critiquing by an other - also unknowable and unique?

I tell you, this 'logic of separate spheres' is not the practiced or lived bicultural experience. Culture is expressed as an interplay between personal/interpersonal and social/intergroup modes of being. I encounter daily the assertions of separate value systems and yet all the while there is renewal, self-understanding and endless transformation arising from contact with others. I speak English, yet in this land it contains words that testify to the meeting of Maori and Pakeha. We know these words, they are part of our shared language: mana, aroha, rangatiratanga, kawanatanga; place names, family names, plants, creatures, waters, mountains. My name. 'English' in this place becomes te reo Pakeha.[5]

As an individual I am not, cannot, be a bearer of a coherent, single culture. And really, what would, could, that 'coherent, single culture' look like? I interact with my environment, that interaction is dynamic; it involves multiple cultures. Just as is my self, so too is culture modified and reshaped. And so, we arrive at a second conceptualisation of culture: a compilation of ways of living that people have and share. Joan Metge names this sense of culture: 'lifeways' (Metge, 1993, p. 7). James Ritchie tells us that in individuals such lifestyle patterns are 'personality', in groups: 'culture' (Ritchie, 1979). Sharp is more forthright, describing this particular conceptualisation of culture as 'messy' (Sharp 1995, p. 119).

I look at myself and the people around me. I see them and me understanding culture in two ways: at once unique, separate; yet also permeable and open to

[5] Te reo: the language; Pakeha: non-Maori; commonly associated with English settlement.

outside ideas and people. This ambiguity within dual and competing understandings of culture is frustrating, yet useful. In ambiguity the ideal of a definitive notion of culture becomes illusory: the stuff of dreams. The lack of apparent substance reminds us to be cautious about claims to 'cultural values.' But, more importantly, we hear again the need to accept ambiguity and tension as integral to the task of conceptualising culture.

Teaching culture

Most teachers wonder if they are doing the right things in their work. Sometimes called evaluation, it often feels closer to self-doubt. The problem is that teaching involves believing that it is possible to fulfil two educational goals that frequently conflict: to help students reach their potential as individuals, and to prepare them to be positive citizens of the national society (Metge, 1993). The teacher is at once in relation with the individual student, the school, and the nation. The task would be difficult enough in an introspective homogeneous social grouping, but in a society concerned with itself as both nation and global partner, every teacher faces a diversity of cultures.

I distinguish and overlap the teaching of culture with teaching as an expression and reinforcement of culture. The distinction is based upon context. When I refer to the teaching of culture I am thinking of my job in teacher education, coordinating courses in which students investigate the conceptualisation of, and issues surrounding, their own cultural identity and that of others. In the background is my memory of experiences in primary education, teaching Social Studies units which focused on people distant or near in time and place. In these ways, the teaching of culture was, and is, the stated focus of learning objectives contained within unit studies.

However, it is also possible to recall those times in which teaching has communicated culture unintentionally and has been a form of enculturation. There is a hint of disillusionment there for me as I know that I must have been selective in my recall of Social Studies experiences, and blind to many of the times in which I inferred or demanded maintenance of the structure and values of society-at-large; believing all along that I was acting for the greater good, yet possibly doing little more than reinforcing positions of domination (Alton-Lee, Nuthall & Patrick, 1994; Jones, 1991). Teaching as a form of culture is a continuous theme; present in every educational context and in every teacher. I do not deny it, or decry it. I simply acknowledge its existence and look for the role it can play in the adequate treatment of understandings of culture. The teaching of culture is always interplaying with teaching as culture. Hear the presence of both when I focus upon the teaching of culture.

The second congregation of words: The community

As I turn again to you, Lineholder, I become the story maker. Within community. In place. I am carried, as Nanny[6] says, by the experience of the people; those who have been present in some way in my living. Some I have met, some I have not. These are the ones of the Earth and on the Earth who urge me, through understanding culture, to wonder upon what it means to belong. But this is not a fairy tale, I tell you. Let us honor the voices of those who present their past to us. With faith. In faith. Their tales evoke feelings of the nearness of truth. Empathy. Collections, maybe treasures, re-collected as we listen. Passages of time and experience, passed on. Perhaps they did happen. And if they did not?

[6] Tena koe Nanny. Nga mihimihinui me te arohanui ki a koe. Nanny, kuia of the school community in this study.

Seeking out community voices

"'Culture'? It's like, it doesn't mean anything
if you haven't got it like inside you."[7]

For some time I tried to reside within the community of Intermediate School. Over a period of seven months I collected formal and informal, written and verbal idea relating to culture. I recorded conversations with forty two members of the Intermediate School community, meeting with students (10-12 years old), parents and caregivers, teachers, the school principal, ancillary staff, community members, male and female, and members of a variety of ethnic groups. I also took part in staff gatherings, lessons, lunch duty, school related community activities, meetings and a plethora of incidental events that make up term life in a school. I felt honored by the willingness of staff, parents and students to accommodate my presence and demands.

Taking 'theory' as 'ideas which explain', I sought community theories about culture because I believed these conceptual frameworks to be concerned with questions about what is worthwhile knowledge and how this may be developed in schools. Community theory was to be valued and stand alongside academic theory.

'Conversations' were undertaken because they were an interactive mode of talk. It was my hope to reduce distance between narrator and scribe (see Peterat, 1983, in Khamasi, 1997, p.24), to allow for differences between and within understandings of culture, and to join with the narrator in a process of gathering 'lived-experience material' such as stories and recollections of cultural incidents (van Maanen, 1990, p. 64). And although I did not realise it for a while, I think I too wanted to be present. The conversations involved me in what Gadamer describes as "the art of testing" (Gadamer in van Maanen, 1990)

[7] Former Intermediate School student.

fundamental assumptions about life, ways of knowing, ways of being. I, too, found myself questioning meaning, I too became involved in developing possibilities for my own understandings of culture (Denzin, 1995).

My talk with the school community members is something other than the recording of case studies. I regard their voices and ideas as sources, stimuli in many ways, for furthering understandings of the relationship between culture and curriculum. Their talk requires commitment and sincerity. Mine. It also requires a research paradigm based upon reciprocity and negotiation (Bishop, 1994).[1] This is research that is incomplete until it is returned to the communities involved; until they are thanked, and until they say what is to happen with the results. It is there within community that matters of validity are genuinely evaluated.

Representing community understandings of culture

Intermediate School teacher:

That's the difficulty
I think
you have:
using words to describe

what the hell's going on.

Those young people yesterday, they couldn't put in words what they had in their understanding of culture.
Um,
they found it extraordinarily difficult to express in words.
But you could sense in the words they did use
that
there
was an

incredible
understanding.

Ways in which the school community perspectives have been incorporated into this text reflect my methodological stance. Just as with quotations of academic texts, interview extracts were selected where they were perceived to contribute in some way to the matter under discussion. The voice is not that of an object on display, but rather a stimulus for further thinking. At times I record that new thinking in the text (see, for example, 'Mary'). In my role as writer I sought to assist the reader where necessary but not dictate.[8] I followed Cruickshank's (1995) lead and provided basic biographical information which a narrator would expect a listener to have. But that is all.

To evoke, rather than merely report, different ways in which community members understand culture I incorporated a variety of styles for representing selections and themes from the conversations. It seemed both risky and natural. And I did have my reasons:

- to honestly acknowledge that I can only formulate a reality that is my own
- to utilise research methods concerned with thinking and feeling rather than procedure and behaviour
- to use forms of expression that evoke and show understandings of culture rather than record
- to avoid processes of othering and exoticising the community members
- to encourage and respect the autonomy of the reader to reach their own conclusions from the texts
- to avoid assaulting the reader with combative, oppositional forms of writing
- to involve the reader in a process of discovering understandings of culture
- to model respectful, challenging principles of teaching culture.

[8] For example, in some cases I have not stipulated the ethnic identity of the narrator because that is made apparent in the text.

You see, this is all part of the journeying towards understanding, journeying together. The research rituals were not enough to help the conversations and understandings. Honestly, we needed something more.

So we have two 'Intercessions' which provide community perspectives on the relationship between culture and curriculum.[9] Prima face these are accounts from two students at Intermediate School, the first focusing upon the communication of understandings of culture, the second, upon the experience of culture. However, many voices (those of caregivers, the author, teacher) combine in a dialogue of sorts.

The intercession is a pedagogical guide that begins with an 'aside' for the teacher of culture. There is an assumed link between research and teacher . Consequently the terms are interchanged or hyphenated. The pragmatic intent of each intercession is summarised in the 'aside' which explains dilemmas faced by the teacher of culture. As a whole the intercession models a possible responses which is based upon an amalgamation of academic and community understandings of culture. In this way the intellectual and the local combine, not as interpretation and case study, but as a singular revisionary effort: to widen awareness in the study and curricular practices of culture.

AN INTERCESSION

May we-who-research be respectful

of the many ways of knowing & understanding

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[9] Four further intercessions are included in the fuller version of this research (see Caddick, 1997).

James

When I met with James, an 11 year old student at Intermediate School, his talk of culture reminded me that there are many ways of knowing and communicating knowledge - some spoken, some not. He also reminded me that cultural and linguistic diversity need not result in languages being perceived as separate, self-contained systems (Metge, 1993. p. 50). James' talk encouraged a focus upon the shared human capacity for language as a symbol carrier of culture. He rejected the need for an other's language to be translated word-for-word because, as James said, "we are all together" in a way of knowing. As we shall see, his talk highlights the way in which culture binds through the construction of a social mind. Children like James can distinguish between their personal and group identities (Banks, 1996). There can be a shared responsibility for knowing which epitomises Malcolm's (1995) idea of variety in forms of thinking; something Wittgenstein had identified as the joining together of "expressions of life" (Malcolm, 1995, p. 5). Thus, translation across cultures is not always necessary when there is a sense of solidarity and trust. The understandings of culture may be communicated through nga tikanga as well as te reo (see *Tihe Mauri Ora!* 1993, p. 14).

If Bruner (1996) is right then the understanding of a concept such as 'culture' will consist in grasping general structures of knowledge, broader principles, that can render its particulars more self-evident. This is exactly what happened when James listened to te reo:

A Some of the story and some of your group's performance was done in Maori, I don't know if you understood every word that was being spoken. You're shaking your head.

J No

A I didn't either. Was that important to translate every word?

J I don't think it was because you got the basic story line there, so no I don't think it was that important to know what every single word meant, because it would be a bit hard to learn but if you've got the basic story line .

A Then how did it feel for you when karakia was being said or the waiata or the karanga? Start with the karakia, how did you feel in those times?

J When she was calling?

A When people were praying in Maori.

J Yeah, um, it was quite, it sounds good, it sounds good, and um, its a nice language, you know, I just liked being able to sort of think what it meant, but um not really knowing that it's our group that's doing this and saying those, and someone in our group is actually doing that part.

A It's a way then of the group being together.

J Yeah, someone in our group was actually saying that, so they know what it is, and um, and they could always share it around, they know it and they're part of the group, so we sort of basically all know it, I think because we are all together.

I did find James's wisdom nigh on epiphanal. James made me more confident of my own experiences and Calder's (1993) analysis of "extralinguistic" realities in language (p. 97). And James made me hopeful. I liked the idea that there were students coming through who were the ones not-of-the-Enlightenment, as Rorty calls them (1991, p. 21). These are the ones for whom truth is something to be pursued because it will be good for oneself, one's community, and not as something pursued for its own sake. This is the making sense of life through solidarity rather than solitary objectivity. This is one of Fine's (1994) "rupturing narratives" (p. 78), one that allows us to hear, albeit unconsciously, the voices of informants who speak out in and that speaking create a change towards equitable relations. This is also the very stuff of stories.

The story that follows, "The Singing Voices", is an allegorical account of linguistic and extralinguistic elements of cultural understanding.[10] Extracts from an interview with parents were sourced as a contrasting perspective upon language and culture. Their voices, however, are not those of 'the baddies'. Indeed, they share with James the common desire for a sense of meaningful collectivity. By definition then the symbolic nature of the story requires that you the reader also seek to make meaning of something other than the words upon the page. There is nothing in story which is not in ourselves. The best of stories is only scenario, to be completed by the listener's, reader's, own experience. The story does give us feeling: it draws out feelings we already have. And we are never alone in our story time. There is a reciprocity in the talk of the story entering our lives. Communication takes place. We, in our telling , listening, reading, we in our different ways, "sort of basically know... because we are all together."

The Singing Voices

For The Teacher Of Culture

Research and curriculum focus: Words of concern

That many ways of knowing are to be incorporated into learning.

Community voice focus: Soundings

Knowledge may be communally located and may be communicated extralinguistically.

Rationale of form of textual representation: Towards a resolution

This intercession evokes a sense of the many ways of knowing through the story telling. The reader engages with the text and creates meaning by linking allegory with experience.

[10] Bruner (1996) suggests that the use of story provides us with the chance to look afresh at what before we took for granted. It affords perspective on past, present and future life ways (p. 139). Although it may be possible to communicate similar information in a less prosaic manner, the shaping of the text can encourage an engagement of the emotion as well as cognition (see Calhoun, 1996). With this intent then to engage the reader fully in the exploration of what it means to teach culture, I tell a story of voices.

Tim's friend told him a story. 'Once there was a time,' she said, 'when the world was known to be without beginning and without end. The mountain had always remained, the river had always flowed. These were the wondrous origins of our time which was yet to come." Tim sat closer so he could see her better and in that way hear more. "We used to sing to the elders, the rocks, the sky, the creatures of the earth, and to the stars. Our songs were like light breaking upon the depths of the unspoken. And there would be a song that welcomed ours. Voices danced as we recognised ourselves within each other," she said.

"It is still possible to hear their songs in these times. They never go away, but we do stop listening for them. I used to push through the harakeke to sit by the creek," she said, "to sit on the big flat rock there, down by the water and wait. I'd listen for the songs. Sometimes I'd sit there day long and night long. Then all of a sudden, at first faintly, then as if they'd never been hushed, the songs would come, moving through the air as if they were dancing."

"But how did they know you? How did they know you'd been waiting there?" Tim's friend smiled gently, "Oh, you had to bring something special to share with them. Something that you knew as a treasure. Your first of anything. The driftwood you loved to touch; so smooth the face within it. And if the sharing was right the songs would come and give to you."

"What would they give you?" asked Tim. "What could a song give you?" His friend smiled even more gently. "That depends," she whispered, "upon what you need to hear them sing."

Tim's cousin, Carla, couldn't stop herself, "My mum says you don't make sense. Everyone knows you need like a choir to make songs. They don't come out of nowhere. That's hocus pocus."

"There were songs in our world before our ears were there to hear them. And they'll continue long after our time as well."

"Mum says it'd be better to teach the song.[11] Tell us the tune and the words.

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[11] **'Reality' 1: Parents (Beth and Andrew)**

B ... As far as the Cultural Festival was concerned, I don't really know how much the children really understood of that. They enjoyed doing it. Yeah, loved it. You know, it was great fun. But

A But I mean if you asked them now, could they actually interpret what the dance, or whatever, meant. I wonder if they could?

B Well they didn't realise, 'cause I said something about it being a Maori legend and they said, "Oh, was it?" And I said, "Well, yeah." Well, that's what I presumed it was.

A That's what the programme read.

B ... So, obviously how, you know, I mean I, without putting teachers on the spot, I don't know how much had been explained to them of what, um, what this all meant. I asked, you know, "The two girls that spoke in Maori, did they write their own words?" You know. "Oh no, no, they were just given them and they read them out." I said, "Oh so they obviously read Maori then." "Well, yeah, I s'pose they must, yeah." And that was sort of that. But they didn't really understand why they did that.

A They didn't actually know what they said.

B They didn't know what they said. They didn't know why they were doing it really. They had just been picked to do this part....Well it, yeah, well I mean maybe that's just our children. Maybe... Because the children did love doing what they were doing. But it's like it never, there was no significance to it. And so therefore, "Well I'm a mosquito [dancer in the Cultural Festival]," or "I'm a such and such." But that didn't seem to mean, "Well this was very. Well this was you know an important part of (whichever part of the the legend it was). But it was like they didn't know that. All they'd done was learn the dance (they were to do it, you know, do in there) and that was it. And there was no going through the motions of: "This is a Maori legend and what we're doing is this, this and this."

Then we could learn it and sing along.[12] That'd be heaps better!" she said and took off before the chance for the final word was lost.[13]

Tim dreamt about songs. In his dreams he heard them in the mountains, mighty and serene. In his dreams he heard them sparkle, notes glimmer like the water running over and between the rocks. He listened but he couldn't hear what they were saying.[14]

Next day Tim went down to the stream, through the harakeke, down to the flat rock. No one was around. Apart from the wind and the water, he was alone. Out of his pocket he took the taonga he had carved for his mother. His hand

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[12]**'Reality' 2: Parent (Frankie)**
"I went to this Maori, well it was the, we went to house before the funeral, and of course all the elders spoke and all the people were speaking and they spoke in Maori. And the father of the daughter that died asked if this one would speak in English because we were, there were so many of us there, Pakehas there, that he wanted us to understand what was being said and he appreciated us coming. Well, the girl that I went with, who was a Maori girl said, "That's a great honor for that to happen." And I said, "Oh well I never understood a word though." I know that I don't come from here, but, you know, no-one else understood it either until that point. And it was sad because obviously what they were saying was very important but yet none of us understood it. So it was lovely that a little bit of it was said in English for us to understand. And I think, you know, it, I think the sensitivity on both sides that, yes the Pakehas have to understand it, the Maoris should be allowed to speak in their language, but then the Maoris need to understand that the only way that you're going to teach Pakehas to understand is to sort of bring in a little bit of English somewhere along the line so that they can, um, not feel like they are completely segregated, um, from the whole issue."

[13] **Reality**: an artefact that does not exist until it is made to do so, agreed to do so. **Truth**: a matter of what is good for *us* to believe, at least until a better idea is suggested (see Rorty, 1991, p. 22). Foucault (1995) points out that contradictions between discourses need not be seen as disjointed, separate and therefore entirely oppositional forces (pp. 149-156). Nor should they be seen as requiring reduction to some harmonising, shared tenet. Rather, it is possible to map each discourse and its relationship with another. The mapping makes a temporary and limited appearance of relationship possible; 'temporary' because meaning making in thought and text remain contingent bodies of expression; 'limited' because any attempt to discover a common theme between the discourses may be only fictional creations of unity that do little to reduce genuine friction between discourses. For the teacher of culture this means that a resolution of contradictory discourses on culture need not be the educational goal. Rather, one should develop the student's ability to think about thinking (see Bruner, 1996); to reveal where the alternatives join, where they are dichotomous, define the locus in which the disparity takes place. That is the union of moment. The conciliation may not necessarily lie beyond the scope of the educational project, but the suppression of contradiction may countervail any possibility of comprehending the true need (or not) for conciliation of discourses.

[14] bhabha (1994) describes a way of knowing that is 'outside the sentence', ie. meaning may be conveyed without predicative syntax (p. 180). This is not to mean the demise of writing, but rather to place it alongside the surprises of meaning making. See also R. Barthes (1975).

trailed in the stream and the water ran through the koru patterning, made the bone shine white and liquid, brought new colour to the paua. He held it there and watched as the currents played with the string tie he'd plaited . "I share this with you before I trust it to my mother's care," he hush-said into the air.[15]

Tim sat on the rock and waited. At times he rested his hand. At times he held it plunged beneath the surface, watched the waters run and rise, twist, turn and fall. Same river, same spot, but always different water. Then as dusk began and light was fading he heard his aunty's whistle. 'Come home,' it said, 'Come home now.'

During the night, Tim woke. He found his room awash in moonlight. He sat up and listened. Everywhere was quiet; not even the rhythm of snoring tonight. Tim padpadpadded softly to the window. He could hear something distant, beyond the big old rata.

He reached for his coat and pitterpitterpittered outside, down to the river, down to the flat rock. He felt his pulse beating between his ears. There by the river, brilliant in sound, dancing tones like the flicker of moonlight across the

[15]The spoken and unspoken ways in which we know, understand and imagine the world posit challenges for canonicity. Rushdie (1992) reminds the educator that the imagination is an essential response to the world (p. 122). Through imagining, he suggests, we are able to break down the dull and conventional, in order that the world, or our part of it, may be reconstructed in empowering ways. A by-product of this reimagined world would be new definitions of canonicity. The authority of the Masters of the Canon would, in the least, be augmented by an acknowledgment of the power-play involved in securing the old canon; and at most, would change the canon to reflect greater diversity in authorship and styles of authoring. As the world changes through imaginations of reality, so too do our sources of authority. The legend, the spoken words of our elders are part of this countercanon that awaits entrance. But, descriptive? Or, transformative? (see Spivak, 1993, p. 273). It rests with the teacher and deconstructive pedagogical strategies to ensure that any confusion between literary intentions is rendered meaningful and productive. Our ways of comprehending place-in-the-world make us as we make them (see Freire & Macedo, 1995, p. 398). A useful approach, would be to view the existence of polemic regarding canonical authority as evidence of multiplicity in subjectivity (see Flax, 1993, p. 98); a way of existence that suggests a need for multiple stories, multiple voices and texts in a variety of styles; a need to appreciate that complexity and to ensure the ability of a new canon that locates and critiques ways of being within our newly imagined world.

river's face; there he heard the first voice and then the next. The rising running notes, pushing forward to flight on the wind, all ideas of beginning and end now suspended. First one, then one more and more; the singing filled the night. Tim reached into his pocket for the taonga, touched it to the river, held it to the moonlight, dried it in the wind.

Clocktime did pass. Maybe minutes, maybe hours. Tim shivered a little and rubbed his eyes. The quiet had returned; just the bubble of water, the shush-shush of the wind rubbing past the harakeke. He wondered if he had been dreaming and moaned a little as he stood and stretched. He should padpad home before... Then from far away, almost at the mountains it seemed, he heard,

'Va'asili!'
'Va'asili!'

The voices knew his name. They were singing his name.

James
After not-words afterthoughts

It is difficult in a scholarly world to write of beliefs and imagination without submitting to science-speak: the -ology, the -ism of it all. My words, symbolic of my passion, are thereby rendered anonymous components of a catch-all-wannabe-thing. What had been clear right now also has a capacity to confuse, and be confusing. The intellectual endeavour to understand the relationship between culture and education will require times of storytelling, the kinds of stories that have three parts: location, narratives and interpretation (see Grumet, 1990). My academic skills and training are my toolkit, yet the story is

told, in all parts, by me and the responsibility to ensure balance in that telling remains with me; my passion and intellect combine.

I need not see my beliefs as an obstacle to meaning.

They are what makes meaning possible.

AN INTERCESSION

May we-who-research culture listen for

whispers of the private, incomplete understandings

Mary

I am beginning to think that this word culture simply brings into view the things which we want to make public. At least I would hope it would do so. There has to be some sense of volition on the part of the narrator. I shouldn't ever be afforded the opportunity to gaze upon that which is intended to remain private. That is part of my ethic as one-who-teaches. It also encompasses a particular regard for knowledge: that it is a treasure, that it is gifted from you to me, me to you, that before the gifting there will be probing, hints, clues, that determine just how ready one is to receive and care for that knowledge.

So when I asked Mary , a student at Intermediate School, about times when she felt connected with culture, it is not surprising that she associates culture with school activities, the public arena that we shared. After all, this interview did take place at lunch time and we sat in the Sick Bay between the Office and the Staffroom. But I wonder just what lessons were learnt from the events she

described. Previously I agreed with Madelaine Grumet's (1987) observation that accounts of educational experience are rarely situated in schools, so why did Mary connect culture with school? And why was so much of her talk of culture actually talk about difference? Now I begin to wonder about the ways in which culture in the school curriculum is a form of representation which plays a constitutive and formative role, not merely reflexive or expressive.[16]

Through Mary I think of culture as having a double reference that addresses both the particulars of school life and the general of self negotiating place and meaning in the largeness of life. And although I would welcome entrance to the private understandings I recognise that some may not have been constituted for articulation, some are just not to be shared, and some I may not be ready to care for. So in the meantime we meet publicly, Mary and I.

I can see now that by asking people to think about or describe their understandings of culture, research becomes an appeal to the deconstruction of identity by identities.[17] As research and teacher of culture I may be forcing a public, heroic face upon private identity and with it a sense of completeness in what is still the realm of developing and partial understandings. The very act of thinking of oneself as an example of the historical, political, social narratives under review, represents one in such a way as to be defined and deidentified; to state and claim an identity within a text that comes from somewhere else. A mask is created. Biographies of understanding become multi-layered within public and private. The stories we hear, whether from the life of 'nobody' or 'somebody', may be but the sounds of only the public lifestory.

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[16] Although I was initially prompted by Stuart Hall's work (1992) to consider constructive elements in the work of 'culture,' Jerome Bruner (1996) has also been helpful in considering the ways in which culture shapes mind. Taking a less conceptual approach to culture, he suggests that culture provides us with a "toolkit" with which we might construct understanding of the world, ourselves and our capacities. The cultural view of the world, then, requires a situatedness where the context of culture can be related to the context of the learner.

[17] Spivak, 1994, p. 157.

So what, then, shall we hear in meeting as we do, talking as we do, where we do?

That the generalities in language do diminish the explanations of understandings of culture is accepted. Yet, we talk on because although our language may limit us, nevertheless our exchange makes a contribution towards the mediation of a space between individual and institution, specific and general, intent and change. These words of theirs inform the words of others about the public experience of the relationship between culture and curriculum. And in the space created we find not only events but also principles. There are values that underlie the interpretations of culture, values that speak of understandings of right relationships; values that speak of eternity yet remain expressions of emerging understandings of what matters in life.[18] As Mary talks about difference she describes what she takes to be right and good; she reveals her movement towards understanding herself and other selves; and in this way her talk combines with our talk. As we each speak, we link thought, contexts, and texts of public and private, heroic and fallible. In the public form of our narration we may be able to feign completeness. Yet Mary shows us a variety of uses of the word 'culture'; she shows us understandings that are both unequivocal and ambiguous; the form and content of her talk combines to reveal cultural understandings for what they are: developmental and therefore partial: our current statement of our current sense of life and values therein.[19]

[18]This bond between 'the eternal' and the 'evolving' is discussed further in Caddick (1997) where it is suggested that cultural practices may change while the principles may remain constant. Such principles are not confined to specific cultures nut are shared and lived cross-culturally. The style of curriculum theory text can evoke the interplay of constancy and change and is modelled in Caddick (1997).

[19] Martha Nussbaum (1990) explores the relationship between form and content in moral philosophy. In affirming a connection between philosophy and literature, she argues that the form of a text conveys a view of life that is relevant to philosophy because it affords a view of what human life is like and binds emotion to intellect. Similarly I am suggesting that in the textualisation of Mary's narratives we are able to glean a sense of understandings of culture in what is said and how it is said. I have intentionally accentuated the significance of form and content by augmenting the transcript excerpts with other forms of dialogue between

And so our talk continues. We speak, we listen as ones for whom cultural identity and understanding is emerging. We relate wholeheartedly, yet understand and articulate that relation partially. Which is as it should be, should it not?

(Re) Making Public Understandings of Culture

For the teacher of culture

Research and curriculum focus: Words of concern

That the development of understandings of culture be viewed as a long term process to which a researcher and teacher might contribute a part.

Community voices focus: Soundings

That understandings of culture are always partial and developmental, yet able to inform other understandings.

Rationale of form of representation: Towards a resolution

This intercession illustrates the way in which the understanding of culture is a dialogue that it is as yet incomplete.

Mary

[When I associate culture with difference I reveal meaning making processes of my own culture]

[We bond because 'culture' means we are different. What if the differences were not so clear?]

Mary, I just think it's really neat that you said that you'd come and meet with me and that we could talk about ideas of culture and times when you've felt connected with culture.

Well I'm involved with performing arts here at school and that's a connection with Maori culture, which I'm really interested in... I think that was really interesting being with other people, different cultures.

Culture = school happenings

Culture = difference

reader and writer. In this way I make apparent and render instructive the internal contradiction that would otherwise exist between Mary's certainty about what culture is and her ambiguous applications of her definitions. The style of text therefore combines with the content to guide the imagination of the reader, setting before them a view of life and invoking a standard for understanding culture.

[But see what my language has done? "What *things* come to mind?" My use of the language rather than the language itself is what diminishes the record]

And when you think about being connected with culture you thought of that time on the marae, so what were the things that came to mind that made you think 'Well, this is a cultural experience'?

Well first of all food, the food was um, just singing, welcomed being welcomed onto the marae, also dancing that was another part just, doing a mural and we got together and we did performances together with some Teachers College people there as well.

Culture = song & dance & food (at least that's what Mary's been led to say) (and believe?)

[When I read: "A culture that discovers what is alien to itself simultaneously manifests what is in itself" (McGrane, 1989, p. 1) I thought it was all bad news. But if the discovery is accompanied by empathy then in the Other, in you, there is a self. I recognise you as another self.]

So when you think about being connected with culture, does it have to be something big like an outing like to a marae or are there other experiences that you can think of where you've felt connected with culture?

At school really, just with other cultures in the classroom, Asians, I help them out in class. I feel yeah that's another part where I am connected with culture, I think, just a different culture.

Culture = the last evolutionary trick (Bruner 1996: 184). Do we (do you) know we are feeding off you so we can adapt to circumstance? And that we intend to survive?

So, if you were to look at yourself and think, 'Well an Asian person looking at me,' do you think they could see you as being of another culture than themselves? - I haven't put that very well.

Culture = either/or dichotomous thinking

As a different culture from them?

Yes, Yes

Yes, probably..

Well, what are the things about you that make up your culture then?

Well I'm a Pakeha. What else? I speak English, I might dress differently to them, I have different coloured skin compared to them. I play different sport, sports to them. I think just being who I am just what I, what's different compared to them. There is quite a few reasons.

[Can difference ever represent stability in relationships? There is still this presumption of separation from the alien. Such oppositionality leads to an objectification of the natural world in order to have a sense of control and the myth of normality. So says Hill Collins (1990, pp. 69, 194).]

You know when people talk about culture and they have different cultures meeting, how do you think things should be?

[And now] Culture = something other than a site of fixed dichotomies

Yeah, I think that all cultures should combine together I think so we can learn about each other. I suppose it's alright if one kind of culture wants to meet together and communicate and that. But I think it would be nice if there was someone from each culture cause we could all get together. That would be good, that would be good.

[Working within a binary discourse blocks the opportunity for change because the reference is always back to the opposite. Think of being different in degree but not in kind.... Mary?]

How come you don't feel out on the outside?

[You/ me, Maori/Pakeha, male/female, subject/ object, fact/ opinion, each gains meaning in relation to the counterpart]

I feel one of them really when I get into it just singing, different things in Maori, just being with Maori and just stuff like that. I think it's good.

And yet you're not becoming one of them?

No I'm not going I don't think I will, but it'll always be good to always participate with them I think, it's the good part of it. I just think, I don't think I have to change my culture I'm with. It's just, I think it's good that we should be able to be with different cultures and yeah.

Culture = empathy through contrast or similarity

Have you had a time when you've felt disconnected, not connected, with culture?

(Source)
The Maori girls
(What happened)
Nothing
(Outcome)
I knew I didn't fit in

Well yeah. Round the school, we've got there's Maori girls in my class which I really like and I think they join you in a lot but I think that I'd probably sometimes I wish I was a Maori because I'd want to be with them where I feel that's when I sort of feel disconnected. But they treat you fairly but yeah, I think everyone sort of tends to go with their culture I think at this school, but

Culture = desire

(Source)
Self
(What happened)
I hung out with some girls
(Outcome)
I didn't fit in
(Sources)
Me, me-as-I-wish
(What happened)
I wished I was Maori
(What happened)
Nothing
(What happened)
Nothing
(What was said then?)
Nothing!
(What did they do to you?)
Nothing
(Then, what's up?)
I don't fit in.
(That happens)

So because you're not Maori, there comes a point where you can't fit in?

Yeah I think sometimes there is when I can't fit in like that. But most of the time I can, people take me for who I am which is good.

Culture = disconnection

It is. But how is it that people let you know that you can't fit it?

Well they don't really say, Oh you can't hang round with us or that, but I think they just sort of tell you well they don't say anything really they just sort of make you feel awkward I think, not in a mean way but you just know yourself that you're not right in that sort of group but yeah it's just sort of a feeling, I think, that you just don't belong. But most of the time they're pretty good.

Culture = Nothing said, plenty learned

[bhabha (1994,p.1) would say this, as the encounter with difference, is also the 'terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood'. How come it doesn't sound so angst-filled when you write like that? I need experience not Academytalk]

Does it happen with other sorts of groups like sports groups or music groups or Pakeha groups where you don't feel connected?

Well sometimes it does I think. In sport if you're not very good people can put you down for that and not want you to be in their group. Same as music groups the same. Yeah, probably. In a Pakeha group someone might not like you. That's probably about all.

Culture = goes a bit deeper than sports team pick ups though. [Doesn't it?]

[So, for some people 'culture' is almost a hobby. For others it is blood on the line]

When you're just wandering around the streets in this city, do you come across experiences of culture then?

No, not really. If you just go to a shopping mall really you just see different cultures round not a whole lot together, you might now and then but not really, people just go their own way I think.

Culture = a definite category that can be observed

[Who is to say which is more meaningful?]

So there's the day-by-day sort of way of living and then there's the cultural. Am I saying that right?

Yeah probably so. There's the days where people can be cultural and there's not days and there's days they're not.

'Culture' = in and out of reality

[I wouldn't dare]

[This 'culture' differs from the beginning ideas. One was to be connected to (like an appliance to a wall socket?); & this one is to be thought and felt. One speaks of thingness; the other, of attributes, values] [My language at work again]

And if you were to say to people, "When I say the word 'culture' I'd like you to think about these things and feel these things in relation to 'culture'," what would you like people to think and feel?

Being together. It's when you can communicate together it's also when you can have ideas, different ways of doing things.

'The map is not the territory and the name is not the thing named.'[20]

CULTURE
iswasmightbe
iswasshallbe
iswasis
is
because I say
so

Mary,

I could so easily place your understandings upon a pinnacle ("words from the mouths of ...."), aspire to them.

Instead I see them for what they are:

as yet incomplete, as we all are, and should be;

as meaningful in solo as in chorus;

as revealing in form as in content.

And always:

a prompt for further conversations.

[20] Alfred Korzybski's rule, cited in Bateson, G. (1979). *Mind and nature* (p. 30). New York: Dutton.

COLLECT OF THIS DAY

No, this is not a fairy tale, they tell me. And I tell you, Lineholder. This is the voice of the past making meaning in the present. 'Honor my words. Honor the place and the people in which my voice is heard. Honor how I understand.' This may sound like myth, made up, never happened. Maybe made up, maybe not. Definitely make-believe. Make-to-believe. Make the effort to trust the speaker; to believe that listening will help our children to understand themselves and their world. Could it be that simple?

What we value is expressed in curriculum.
The journey we make towards these values is there when we describe understandings of culture.

To speak, to write; these are the revelations and limitations of our private and public biographies.

Third Congregation: Resolutions

We live. We are primarily concerned with life, and the living. Before my narrative, life existed. And it continues after. Yet in between, the examination of the relationship between culture and curriculum transforms Life from a mere biological phenomenon: culture as known and unknowable lifeways; curriculum as the interpretation and advancement of life; life as engagement with others and the world. As we try to understand the relationship between culture and curriculum we glimpse the workings of the primary ontological vocation: to strive after ever fuller humanness. We remember Life as voiced understandings and vision. We have to hope.

Where we have been and where we now go

1. Into the universe

The notion of culture as the descriptor of the ways we choose to live life; the notion of curriculum as the indicator of what we might choose to pass on about the living of life. These become questions of fundamental meaning when viewed through the universe; questions lived, and momentus.

What we have heard from text and community have made me wonder about fundamental motivations in education. What is it that causes one to seek a better world? Are there voiced principles here that might guide me in that quest? In trying to hear and to answer, I am returned to Romantic traditions that speak of universalities. Beneath apparent diversity and confusion lies cohesion, wholeness. And like Emerson, I begin to view Nature as somewhat benign. Similar to William James' (1985) 'religious hypothesis', the conceptualisation of a relationship between culture and curriculum can be interpreted as an act of faith: that we are impelled to faith, that we are to do the universe the deepest service we can. We undertake this service because of a belief in a common source, in change, diversity, harmony, abundance. We are essentially human and therefore may decide upon any genuine option that cannot be defended on intellectual grounds. From this universal perspective, we are right and have the right to believe that the relationship between culture and curriculum is to be founded upon moral principles.

In conceptualising a relationship between culture and curriculum we can act as if we are free to choose, as if we do accept the worth of principles of universe in educational discourse, as if the universe itself is benevolent and beneficial; and in so doing we find that these actions and words do make a difference in our

moral life. In principle then, the voices of text and community tell us that the relationship between culture and curriculum is expansive and comprehensive.

2. On the Earth

Yet, how adequate is the universal principle? Ironically, the appeal to comprehensiveness in understandings of culture and curriculum is limited. And necessarily so. The voices of text and community also remind me that my work as teacher-researcher is to be guided by principles of location and urgency.

I do love to gaze at the stars, to imagine the vastness of the universe, to seek harmony. But this is done from Earth. If I should look down, walk around, my feet are on Earth. If I should look up, turn around, my feet are still on Earth. Yes, there should be and there is a resonance of higher principles as we consider culture and curriculum. And yet understandings of the relationship between culture and curriculum should also help to remind us of the place from which we gaze out upon the universe. Real people living real lives in real places.

However erudite, however uplifting, any conceptualisation of the relationship between culture and curriculum must also remain grounded to the complexities and subtleties of daily life. Education is concerned with the political, economic and cultural lives of real people. Talk of the movement, the organic intertwining of curriculum and ideals, the possibility of breaking through cycles of hegemony. But talk, too, of full employment, greater democratic participation, the radical reorganisation of social relations within education. Do tell me that the view of education as the outcome of power relations alone is inaccurate and simplistic. Show me the existence of contradictory ideological views about education and its purpose. Seek not only to hear, but to create; the creation of systems in which students might reclaim their intelligence and therefore the ability to transcend life limitations. Then think, of culture ensuring

curriculum is understood as part of an economy. Not metaphorical, but real, hard, hungry economics. Of resources. Of knowledge. Of access. Tell me of experiences. And earth them.

These are principles within lessons for we-who-teach-and research: lessons that require courage to understand the work that the relationship between culture and curriculum plays as an agency of the state; courage to take anti-racism into the classroom, extended beyond its role as a forum of grievance, augmenting the contribution of cultural studies to curriculum; courage to revisit, revise, reject and re-source the ideas and materials which support our lessons. And to then tell of the experiences. Honest courage. Honorable, earthed intent.

We seek a 'maturity of reason' (Kant, 1913) - that understanding which Markus (1993) describes as being "between the optimistic blindness of a dogmatic belief in the unlimited power of our understanding *and* the resigned or reconciled impotence of paralyzing scepticism" (p. 26). The particularising of discourse on culture and curriculum, through historical and social location on the one hand, and identification of the personal dimensions of voice, on the other, should enable a deepening of the political and transformative possibilities of education. We seek to mature as teachers of culture.

In our journey across this text-place it has been made clear that discourse on both curriculum and culture does not provide 'truth,' but representations. Deeply meaningful ones, certainly. Each person engaging in either, or both, curriculum and culture brings meaning to that engagement; re-presents an understanding of truth. Aspects of life on earth. And in this way any claim to veracity relies more upon that person and their time, place and people than upon this thing called 'the relationship between culture and curriculum.' There

is no meaning in 'curriculum' and 'culture,' and no relationship between them, until you and I bring meaning to these concepts.

The situatedness of understandings of curriculum and culture has implications for classroom practices. My practices. They are to come home. There is to be no distance between theory, research and practice; no hiding in the world of ideas in order to avoid the obligations and responsibilities of home. It is essential to ensure that in seeking to generate understandings of culture, the ways of knowing and representing should not perpetuate and express inequities. Secondly, if curriculum is to further cultural discourse, both it and its relationship to understandings of culture must be seen and treated as value laden and contextualised.

We discuss and include particularities, 'locators', of place in the writing of this text. These particularities recognise the personal dimension of being an author. I bring a particular perspective to my task as writer. And as far as possible, I make that explicit. And I would hope that I would continue to do so as one-who-teaches-researchers-culture. The temptation is to treat such explicitness as a confession. Yet what I am suggesting is more akin to an assertion; a statement that in this context, these are the specific aspects of concern. Not encoded, not generalised, not trivialised, but explicit. Talk on 'culture' should not be allowed to encourage over-intellectualisation of an issue which pivots upon specific, historical, relational operations of power.

It may be that in our educational concerns about culture we need to focus less on the word 'culture' and more upon 'ways', lifeways. Perhaps culture-as-word has served its purpose for now and we need other ways of thinking and talking that will assist us in relating with each other. In my conversations at Intermediate School, the word 'culture' would get in the way of what was being

communicated at the time; fundamental understandings of what matters. It was as if culture-as-word was demanding a construction of its own, one that stood apart from the main dwellings of understanding; a schematic annex, in some ways. What is more this annex had particular designs of thinking, ones that echoed of the origins of the word as cultivator, civiliser, divider between self and other (see Markus, 1993).

If we get away from being word-centred we enter into the midst of lifeways. We are surprised by principles of constancy and relatedness. And we feel compelled to ensure that our work in research and teaching should honor these principles.

On one occasion I asked a class of students at Intermediate School to write down what came to mind when they thought about the word 'culture.' One student wrote: "It's about being cultureal." Now, whether the spelling was accidental or not, I will never know. But it is fortuitous. The remaking of the word 'culture' to *cultureal* invites a regard for the living-ness of things cultural; to not be distracted by the constructions of the word, but rather the interplays of life that are summarised by culture-as-word. This means a constant regard for the human dimension of 'culture,' in particular, and culture-in-curriculum in general. We do not need to choose between The Word and The People. They are present, or should be, in both. My world and a deeper understanding of the desires within it will come to you and me through understandings of culture in curriculum. Culture-as-word, culture-as-hope-in-curriculum has no heart, soul or prestige without 'he tangata, he tangata, he tangata.'[21]

3. A resolution of Words

[21] I am alluding here to, and quoting part of, a whakatauki well known in Aotearoa New Zealand and often cited in educational documents. Metge (1995) indicates that this saying is attributed by Muriwhenua experts to a rangatira woman affirming the value of continuity and growth.

As I research and teach I can affirm and nurture our living-ness. I can allow good to catch my heart through honoring principles manifest within conversations for being related; principles arising from a community of academy and school. For this I need a 'language' for the processes and purposes of culture in education; one that informs the project of teaching culture.

This would be a language primarily of principles; a kaupapa[22] for curriculum concerned with culture. The vocabulary of this 'language' would follow naturally with each speaker, but the *tone* is what the kaupapa would generate. Speaking (in voice and print) and echoing what has been heard throughout this place of text, this 'language' would include the following principles:

- adopting a global perspective of culture that honors particularities of the local context and may, therefore require intentional bias in educational practices and decisions
- incorporating many ways of knowing culture and expressing that knowing
- seeking non-oppositional ways of interpreting cultural difference
- upholding the view that the teaching of culture is a collaborative holistic project where learning takes place in many ways with many teachers, without extracting understandings of culture from lifeways
- affirming the coexistence of change and constancy in understandings of culture
- making explicit the teacher's curricular contribution to understandings of culture

[22] I have hesitated to use the word 'kaupapa' for fear of seeming to trivialise te reo, treating it as a mere acquisition for cultural-political correctness. I realise though that I may be being overly cautious and denying elements that permeate my own lifeways. Te reo Maori is an integral part of my Aotearoa New Zealand English. I remember listening to Bishop Allan Pyatt speaking wonderfully in te reo as he mihi-ed to the congregation at the newly consecrated Phillipstown church. Part way through his whaikorero he moved from te reo Maori to English. He smiled a little and said, "I'll move across now [between the languages] because it is important that I remain honest to who I am." In a similar way I have chosen to include te reo Maori where I have believed myself to be writing honestly.

- respecting the voices of community, voices that may amend and stand alongside other sources of knowledge.

This, then, is a language for conversations for being related; a resolution to honor academic and community based understandings of culture in relation to curriculum. Not flux and change, polarity and difference; not 'the beginning of,' not 'foundational,' but a gathering of whakaaro, thinking, kaupapa, principles, tikanga, lifeways and wairua, spirit, such as we have known in journeying through this place-of-text.

THE FARE-WELL

As We Gather To Go Outside

[we who have journeyed]

It is time to leave.
Everyone is dispersing;
to our work, to our homes.

You have been welcome. You are no longer an outsider. You are amongst us now. Always. And as one in our midst, you in holding our lines, you have responsibilities. Have you felt the sharing of breath in these words? You are expected to listen, genuinely. To think. To envision. And to intend to act. What in-deed would be the conviction of your innermost hopes?

From this land we can look to the universe for inspiration. We can be enabled to celebrate, commemorate, trust human understandings of being human. In this place we find beginnings of hope, reasons to act; to revise how we meet, speak, write with each other. In this place there is both infinity and limitation. Together they make these understandings, this relationship between culture and curriculum, gleam with passion.

I am not lost in the wordy worldliness of it all, of this. I'm linked. And being researcher-teacher acknowledges that link. I consider ways in which I might enable a just understanding of the relationship between culture and curriculum. I look to the universe, the Earth, home, myself and you, the one who has held me.

I acknowledge constancy in higher principles and return to the particularities of place. And in returning I see that I am both the subject and the subjected. Home and wandering. Somewhere here in the blessed void between text and life.

Line Holder,

detach.

Fare-well.

GLOSSARY

Aotearoa, *New Zealand; 'The Land of Never Ending Light'*
aroha, *compassion, love, affection, pity*
harakeke, *flax*
karakia, *prayers*
karanga, *call, welcome*
kawanatanga, *government*
kaupapa, *Plan, proposal, theme*
koru, *design in shape of fern-head*
kuia, elder
mana, *influence, power, status*
Maori, *Maori*
mihimihi, *greeting*
nga, *the* (plural)
nui, *big*
Pakeha, *non-Maori*
rangatiratanga, *chieftainship*
Rata, *Rata* (native tree)
reo, *language, voice*
tangata, *people*
taonga, *prized possessions, treasure*
te, *the* (singular)
tena koe, *greetings to you*
tikanga, *custom, rule, reason*
wairua, *spirit, the incorporeal aspect of the person*
whaikorero, *speech or speechmaking*
whakaaro, *thought, intention; understanding; plan*
whakatauki, *proverbs, proverbial sayings*

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